

1/14/13

Dear Representative Haddad,

Cough Cough*

"Unfortunately," the doctor says "Billy has inhaled too much smoke so his lungs are not working properly. He has been diagnosed with asthma and needs to carry an inhaler with him at all times. I'm sorry."

You are probably wondering what caused this to happen. It's a simple answer and here it is... SMOKE. Because of the law in Connecticut that states, "Drivers and passengers are allowed to smoke in vehicles carrying children," this has been happening to many families across Connecticut. If I were State Representative for a day, I would propose to change this law so that there would be a ban on smoking while kids are in a vehicle. It would prevent fatal injury to the lungs and body, as well as greatly increase road safety. Also, getting rid of this law would set a better example for the younger generations, resulting in a healthier future. As you can see, abolishing this law has only a positive outcome and this is why I urge you to agree with me when I say, smoking in cars with children should **not** be allowed.

First of all, removing the law would greatly improve many children's health. According to a report by a surgeon, "Secondhand smoke causes children to get sick more often, including severe cases of asthma. Also, since babies' bodies aren't fully developed yet, the poisons in

smoke can hurt them even more severely than children. And if babies breathe in the secondhand smoke, it is known to cause sudden infant death syndrome.” Would you want that to happen to your children? I don’t think so! If driving and smoking cause this much damage, don’t you think we should prevent it from happening? I certainly do! So I say we dispose of this law and ban smoking in cars with children, before we risk anyone else’s health.

Secondly, banning smoking in cars with children would greatly improve the safety of the roads. As I was researching this topic I came across a website called www.maafirm.com. This website referred to the National Institutes of Health. They say that a study was taken to examine the impact of smoking while driving. The study results were... “On average, people who smoked while driving were even more distracted than people who used a cell phone. Cigarette smokers averaged 12.0 seconds of distraction (equal to traveling 525 feet without looking at the road), while cell phone users averaged 10.6 seconds of distraction (traveling 492 feet without looking at the road).” Another study was taken with the FMCSA; this study showed that “Smoking was a source of distraction in 0.9 percent of distraction-related crashes, which equals about 12,780 crashes over the five years that were examined.” Do you see how dangerous smoking and driving is? There were 12,780 crashes in five years, because of smoking and driving. Don’t continue taking a risk with innocent lives; let’s protect them by abolishing the driving and smoking with children law. Let’s prevent anymore fatal injuries from happening due to smoking in a vehicle.

Lastly, I feel that the smoking with children law should be removed because it results in bad role models for children. A child always looks up to their parents, right? They want to look

like them, talk like them, and, most importantly, be like them. If a child sees his/her parent smoking, they will think it's ok and want to do it, too! Do you want this reaction from your children? I would certainly hope not. Smoking causes lung cancer, cardiovascular disease, emphysema, and many more lung related illnesses. Do you want this to happen to your children? Of course not! This is why we need to eliminate the smoking with children law, before they start to smoke themselves, and risk their health in the future.

As you can see, smoking in vehicles with children causes deaths, illness, and marks a bad path in your children's future! Do you really want your children to grow up inhaling toxic smoke and wanting to be a smoker? I hope not. This is why I urge you to join me and dispose of this intolerable law. Stop the deaths, stop the illness, and, most of all, stop the image this law is placing in young children's minds. It's now or never! Do you really want continuous smoke-related accidents or do you want to prevent these sorrowful incidents from happening? Is keeping this law in place worth the deaths of innocent children? I think not! Twenty-one states across the country have already proposed to put a ban on this law, and only four states (plus Puerto Rico) have banned smoking in vehicles carrying children. Let's make those numbers rise, and abolish this law before anyone else gets hurt.